

4-H Agriculture Field Day Returns to the 4-H Training Center

What do you get when you mix 710 children and the 4-H Training Center on a sunny day in May?

You get the first "LIVE and IN-PERSON" 4-H Animals, Food, and Agricultural Life Field Day in 4 years!!!

On Tuesday May 16th, thirty-eight classrooms, grades 1st-3rd, from nine Saratoga County schools came together for an amazing day of fun and learning at the 4-H Training Center on Middleline Road in Ballston Spa. During the previous 3 years, 4-H School Outreach has supplied virtual agriculture presentations in lieu of the customary in-person program due to the pandemic. This year, the event was held in-person once again and 6 different Saratoga County School Districts got in on the fun.

There were 32 volunteer presentations on a wide array of topics pertaining to many different aspects of agricultural life. There were 19 presenters with their animals. Presentations ranged from horses, chickens, sheep, goats, and cows to alpacas, herding dogs and Longhorn cattle. There were presentations on bees, pollination, maple production and a visit from the Dairy Ambassadors to make butter.

Each child traveled with their class to eight different 12-minute presentations. They each got to see a representative selection of topics. They learned of the lifecycle, care and feeding, and agricultural uses of various animals. They had the opportunity to touch fibers, pet a few animals, and ask lots of questions. After the programming concluded, schools had the option to stay and enjoy lunch on the grounds before boarding one of the 18 buses to return to their school.

For many of these students, it was the first field trip they have participated in during their school career!! Luckily the weather cooperated, and the children left with smiles on their faces and some experiences they may never get again. As our society gets further from the daily food production, it is important that children understand where their food comes from and who helps provide it.

Volunteers are the heart of 4-H, and the wonderful experiences they provide for children with the sharing of their time, animals, and knowledge are priceless.



4-H Agriculture Field Day is part of 4-H School Outreach, which offers hands-on, in classroom programming to elementary age children in Saratoga County school. Classroom teachers select from a variety of programs that support their teachings and satisfy New York State Next Generation Learning Standard requirements.

To learn more about 4-H School Outreach visit:

[Cornell Cooperative Extension | 4-H School Outreach](#)

Saratoga County 4-H Breaks Ground on New Educational Facility

Facility will increase opportunities for the Saratoga County 4-H program as well as outside youth organizations

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Saratoga County is proud to announce that they have broken ground on a new Community STEM and Agricultural Educational Center at the 4-H Training Center on Middleline Road in Ballston Spa. The 3,650 sq./ft. facility will encompass three state-of-the-art classrooms and will increase opportunities for the Saratoga County 4-H program as well as outside youth organizations.

This project has been on the table for over 8 years. “The Program Committee and I saw a need for increased classroom space. We had outgrown the meeting space that we currently have, which is utilized by our 4-H clubs, as well as many other organizations from across the county”, said Greg Stevens, 4-H Program Leader. The program looked at many options and landed on expansion via a totally new educational center. The CCE/Saratoga County Board of Directors gave their approval for the project, and the committee quickly got to work and began to design.

When the pandemic hit, like many things, the project was put on hold, including the Capital Campaign to raise funds for building. “It wasn’t fiscally or socially appropriate to be asking businesses and the community to donate who were struggling themselves for money,” Stevens added. When the effects from the pandemic slowed down, 4-H and countless dedicated volunteers reignited the project. Led by financial support from



L to R: 4-H Volunteer Paul Laskey and 4-H Program Leader Greg Stevens

Stewarts and the Dake Family Foundation, Curtis Lumber, the Golub Foundation, the Alfred Z. Solomon Charitable Trust, and so many others, 4-H has raised nearly \$400,000. While this is enough to break ground on the project, they admit they have more fundraising to do to reach their ultimate goal of \$500,000. “We have made fantastic progress, and we appreciate the help to date, but we still need more support,” said Meg Soden, the current 4-H Program Committee Chair.

“We are getting so close, but there is still work to be done to reach our goal,” said Stevens. If you are interested in supporting Saratoga County 4-H by donating to the “Lead the Legacy” campaign, please go to [Cornell Cooperative Extension | Lead the Legacy \(ccesaratoga.org\)](https://ccesaratoga.org)

Include your company in a naming opportunity at this new state of the art facility.

For more information about the 4-H program or our campaign, please call 518-885-8995. The 4-H Youth Development Program is the youth education component of Cornell Cooperative Extension.



4-H Scholarship Golf Classic

The Saratoga County 4-H Leaders' Association will be holding their 22nd Annual 4-H Scholarship Golf Classic on Saturday, June 3, 2023 at the Fairways of Halfmoon. Registration begins at 7:30 AM; In Carts 8:45 AM; Shotgun Start.

Since the tournament's inaugural year in 2000, there have been fifty-eight \$1,000 college scholarships awarded to Saratoga County 4-H youths. The overwhelming generosity of players, sponsors, and volunteers throughout the years have continuously made this fundraiser our most successful endeavor! It is a true investment in our Leaders of Tomorrow!

Registration for this event is now open! Visit:

<https://ccesaratoga.org/.../saratoga-county-4-h...> for details!

We invite you to gather your foursome and join festivities again this year at the beautiful Fairways of Halfmoon. This year, we are challenging you to share our information with fellow golfers and encourage them to create a new foursome! You may also register an incomplete team or as a single. We will happily organize a team for you.



As always, your contribution to 4-H is a tax-deductible donation under current IRS guidelines.



FREE Rabies Clinic

(Donations are accepted)

Held at the 4-H Training Center, 556 Middleline Road, Ballston Spa
Questions? Call the Animal Shelter at 518-885-4113

2023 DATES: June 27, August 22, and September 5

TIMES: (Times are strictly enforced)

Cats 5:30 pm—6:30 pm; **Ferrets** 5:30 pm—6:30 pm (must be in a cage or carrier), and
Dogs 6:30 pm—7:30 pm (must be on leash)

All vaccination certificates are written for one year. If a previous signed certificate is produced, a 3-year certificate will be written.

GENERAL RABIES INFORMATION:

Rabies can be carried by any wild mammal (raccoon, skunk, fox, coyote, or bat). There are also precautionary measures taken if you are bitten by a domestic animal (dog, cat or ferret). If this happens you should first obtain the owner's name, address and phone number. Then contact the Saratoga County Public Health Department at 518-584-7460.

CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY

CCE Saratoga offers car seat education and correct installation by our Nationally Certified Child Passenger Safety Instructor. Please contact Cindy at cjd53@cornell.edu to schedule an appointment.

CCE also offers several other fitting station locations with certified technicians throughout Saratoga County for your convenience. (All fitting stations require an appointment, so please call in advance to schedule.)

DIABETES SUPPORT GROUP ONLINE

CCE Saratoga hosts a monthly Online Diabetes Support Group. The informal support group will **June 9** rather than June 2. Join others with prediabetes or diabetes to ask questions, and share successes and challenges associated with controlling your diabetes with diet and physical activity. Lead by Diane Whitten, Nutrition Educator, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Saratoga County.

Register by visiting [Meeting Registration - Zoom](#)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The next Board of Directors Meeting is scheduled for July 20, 2023 at 7 pm. At the County Fairgrounds. If interested in attending, please contact Wendy at 518-885-8995 or wlm8@cornell.edu.



Communication Skills for Farm Managers

Learnable skills and techniques for difficult conversations

In any business giving and receiving feedback and dealing with difficult conversations can be hard. Building great relationships and motivating a team are important aspects of successful farm operations. Becoming skillful with difficult conversations can strengthen a farmers ability to create and sustain successful teams, which is essential for achieving outstanding performance of a farm.

Feedback and Difficult Conversations: Communication Skills for Farm Managers offers practices and techniques for feedback and difficult conversations in the workplace including::

- getting clear on what's most important
- key shifts for a proactive and constructive approach
- moving from reactivity to response
- navigating a challenging conversation
- problem solving when there are unmet expectations
- receiving feedback
-

The guide is available as a printable pdf under the resources section of our website: www.nysamp.com or request a printed copy (info@nysamp.com) – send us your mailing address.

The New York State Agricultural Mediation Program (NYSAMP) offers mediation, conflict coaching, or facilitation for farms working through relational challenges in the workplace.

NYSAMP can help farmers manage conflict for other issues including farm leases, farm transitions, credit and debt disputes, interpersonal family issues, neighbor disputes, and USDA contracts.

Contact us for more information at 866-669-7267 or info@nysamp.com

Development of NYS Ag. Mediation Program's new workbook is made possible by funding from the United States Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food & Agriculture. This work is supported by 7 U.S.C. 5936, Section 7522 of FCEA of 2008, Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network (FRSAN), Grant No. 2021-70035-35550, from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

–NYSAMP

NYS Ag Mediation Program

[Communication Skills for Farm Managers](#) | [Morning Ag Clips](#)

Saratoga County Soil & Water Conservation District Tire Recycling Program

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 3 | 4:00 PM—5:30 PM

BEHIND MALTA TOWN COURT, 2538 State Highway 9, Malta

This Program is open to ALL Saratoga County Residents.

Registration & Proof of Residency is REQUIRED, please register by FRIDAY, September 29.

- Photo ID with Saratoga County address will be required at drop off
- Maximum of 10 tires per vehicle
- Tires (with or without rims) MUST be:
 - Whole
 - **CLEAN**
 - Passenger Car/Passenger Truck tires ONLY:
 - * Passenger Car/Truck Tires must be less than 20"
 - * **NO** bobcat, agricultural, loader, OTR, crawler tracks, aircraft, over-size truck (385, 425) tires, no tubes or calcium, etc.
- Payment is due at time of collection (we will not accept payment prior to drop off). Fees are as follows:
 - Tires (with or without rims) - **\$5.00 each**
- Payment must be made in **CASH**; Exact change is very helpful

Register online @ [SARATOGA SWCD FALL TIRE RECYCLING PROGRAM \(google.com\)](#)

OR Call to register: 518-885-6900





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by **Country Folks**

NEW DATES & TIMES!!



The Summer Farm Show for the Northeast!

EMPIRE FARM DAYS

August 3-4-5, 2023

Thursday 9-4 • Friday 9-8 • Saturday 9-4
Palladino Farms - • 3149 Sweet Road, Pompey, NY 13138

**Don't Miss Your
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Contact Your **Country Folks Sales
Representative or Call 800-218-5586**



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PO Box 121, Palatine Bridge, NY 13428 • 800-218-5586

www.empirefarmdays.com

Equine Nutrition: Interpreting Your Forage Analysis



Thursday, June 8th, 6:30-7:30PM

Online via Zoom

Learn how to interpret forage analysis results with real examples!

Presenter: Karen Johnson, Cargill Animal Nutrition

Pre-register here: https://reg.cce.cornell.edu/EquineForageAnalysis_222

Questions? Contact Abbey Jantzi at aej48@cornell.edu or
315-788-8450 ext. 278



**Cornell Cooperative Extension
Livestock Program Work Team**

Cornell Cooperative Extension is an employer and educator recognized for valuing AA/EEO, Protected Veterans, and Individuals with Disabilities and provides equal program and employment opportunities. Please contact the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Jefferson County office if you require an accommodation.

Pollinator Palooza

Sunday, June 4th, 2023 | 10am until 2pm

390 Wilton-Gansevoort Road, Gansevoort

(former Oligny Garden Center - just 10 miles from downtown Saratoga Springs)

Sustainable
Saratoga

Educate.
Advocate.
Act.

Native plants for native pollinators Every garden, no matter how small, has an important role to play in protecting pollinators. Planting native plants is an essential part of creating food and habitat for our native pollinators. However, finding native plants can often be a challenge. The Pollinator Palooza native plant sale makes a variety of native plants available to gardeners in the Saratoga area.

For more information and a plant list please click [here](#).

This family-friendly event includes:

- Native plants for sale
- Information about native plants
- Information about native pollinators
- Free soil pH testing by Cornell Cooperative Extension (bring about 1/4 cup of dry soil)
- Help with gardening questions
- Regional organizations focused on native plants and ecosystems
- Activities for children
- Raffles to win books, gift certificates, plants, and more

NEW THIS YEAR: Food Trucks

Gold Medal Flour Recall

General Mills today announced a voluntary national recall of two-, five- and 10-pound bags of its Gold Medal Unbleached and Bleached All Purpose Flour with a “better if used by” date of March 27, 2024, and March 28, 2024. The recall is being issued for the potential presence of *Salmonella* Infantis, which was discovered during sampling of the five-pound bag product.

This recall affects two date codes of Gold Medal Unbleached All Purpose Flour in the five- and ten pound bags and two date codes of Gold Medal Bleached All Purpose Flour in the two- and five-pound bags. All other types of Gold Medal Flour are not affected by this recall.

Consumers are asked to check their pantries and dispose of the product affected by this recall. Consumers who have had to discard products covered by this recall may contact General Mills Consumer Relations at 1-800-230-8103.

[Guidance from the Food and Drug Administration](#)(FDA) and the [Centers for Disease Control](#)(CDC) warn that consumers should refrain from consuming any raw products made with flour. *Salmonella* Infantis is killed by heat through baking, frying, sautéing or boiling products made with flour. All surfaces, hands and utensils should be properly cleaned after contact with flour or dough.

Follow this link to the complete [General Mills Flour Recall Notice](#).



Cornell**CALS**

Spongy Moth (Formerly Gypsy Moth)

The spongy moth is one of the most important forest pests in the Northeast. The caterpillars feed on leaves of the forest, shade, ornamental and fruit trees, and shrubs. A single defoliation can kill some evergreens, but usually, two or more defoliations are needed to kill hardwoods.

Caterpillars

In the spring, ¼ inch long hatchling caterpillars move away from the egg mas to feed on leaves. To do so, they often produce silken threads that catch in the wind and send them aloft to other trees—a practice called “ballooning” that enables their spread.

- Early instar larvae are small, dark brown –to-black, and very fuzzy.
- Later instars lighten in color and have a showy display of two rows of colored spots: five pairs of blue and six pairs of red.
- At about seven weeks, larvae are fully grown at 2-2½ inches long.



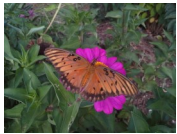
[Cornell University Fact Sheet](#)

[Btk Pesticide Treatment Info](#)

[Forest Health Fact Sheet](#)

[How to Properly Water Your Trees](#)

[Spongy Moth Management Guide for Homeowners](#)



Rediscovering Zinnias

By Susan McClure

While gardening is generally an avocation requiring patience, this isn't the case with [zinnias](#), one of the quickest flowers to bloom from seed. The huge range of flower colors, types, and sizes provides outstanding options for beds, borders, ground covers, containers, and cut flowers. Since I last wrote about them for this magazine 10 years ago, many new kinds of zinnias, including low-maintenance and disease-resistant types, have been introduced. These improvements may be just the impetus that brings these classic flowers, reminiscent of the roaring 1920s and country bouquets, into the gardens of a new generation.

Main Types of Zinnias

Zinnias come in two main types: the large-flowered, upright, often tall garden kinds; and the small-flowered, low, often spreading kinds. Plants that result when these kinds are bred are called interspecific crosses.

Plants range from compact miniatures through medium-height bedding and border types to tall cutting types. The flowers, which are actually clusters of individual florets, come in single daisylike flowers, formally tailored doubles, cactus-flowered types with quilled rays, and anemone-flowered forms with broad rays around a cushioned center. Zinnia flowers, from nickel to Frisbee size, bloom in lavender, orange, pink, purple, red, rose, salmon, white, yellow, and even green.

[Garden zinnia \(*Z. elegans*\)](#) is the parent of dozens of beautiful but disease-susceptible varieties. These are famous for producing lavish displays of flowers, which come in many sizes. Plants range from 6 to 50 inches tall and have bristly oval leaves.

Choices include fully double flowers less than an inch wide on nearly 2-foot-tall varieties such as 'Lilliput Mix', or on miniature varieties such as 6- to 10-inch-tall 'Thumbelina Mix'. The 24- to 30-inch-tall 'Sunbow Mix' has 1-1/2- to 2-inch flowers. In the 2- to 3-inch flower range, you can choose among the 10-inch-tall Lollipop series, the 24- to 36-inch-tall Ruffles series, or flashy 24- to 30-inch-tall 'Envy' with unique single or double green flowers.

The large-flowered zinnias are the ones that capture most gardeners' fancies. For 5-inch-wide blooms on long stems, look for 30-inch-tall 'Giant-Flowered Mix' and the disease-tolerant 40- to 50-inch-tall Blue Point series. These big bloomers benefit from dead-heading, weekly if possible, and may need staking for extra support.

[Spreading zinnias \(*Z. angustifolia*\)](#) have small, 1- to 2-inch-wide flowers, usually orange or yellow with dark centers, and slim, lance-shaped leaves. They resist common foliar diseases and tolerate heat and drought. Growing in loose mounds and reaching 8 to 18 inches tall, they can serve as annual ground covers, and are also attractive in hanging baskets or at the front of a border.

Varieties include golden-orange 'Classic', 'Crystal White' (a 1997 All-America Selections winner), 'Star Gold', and 'Star Orange'.

Interspecific crosses are low-maintenance zinnias that have been introduced over the last decade. They combine the flower colors of garden zinnias with the durability of spreading zinnias.

The front-runner in this group is 'Rose Pinwheel', a mildew-resistant 1988 release with 3-1/2-inch single dusty rose flowers on tidy 12-inch-tall plants. The Pinwheel series now includes flowers in gold, orange, pink on white, and white.

In 1999, 'Profusion Cherry' and 'Profusion Orange' won the first All-America Selections Gold Medals awarded in a decade. Both bloom early and repeatedly, flowering in my garden just 45 days after planting three-week-old seedlings. They produced an abundance of 2-inch-wide flowers up until the first fall frost, long after other zinnias were finished. They grow about 15 inches tall, covering the old flowers with new leaves and buds, and thus eliminating the need to deadhead.

Unless given light afternoon shade, flowers of 'Profusion Cherry', which also won a Fleuroselect Gold Medal in European trials, tend to fade from a deep vibrant cherry to bleached cherry as they age -- a look some people like.

Zinnias in the Garden

In containers, small- to medium-sized zinnias make a bright accompaniment to asparagus fern, ivy, variegated euonymus, licorice plant (*Helichrysum petiolare*), and petunias. Small zinnias make good edgers for summer annuals, filling in after spring pansies.

Medium-height zinnias blend beautifully into bright bedding schemes, mixing with daisy-flowered annuals such as cosmos and dahlias, or contrasting with spiky-flowered annuals such as salvia and larkspur. I particularly like 'Rose Border Beauty' with 'Purple Wave' petunias.

Tall zinnias are ideal for cutting and can be planted in clusters between perennials in a sunny, mixed bed. For instance, vivid orange-, red-, and yellow-flowered Mexican zinnias (*Z. haageana*) are good companions for sunflowers and black-eyed Susans. Brick red *Z. peruviana* 'Bonita Red' is a good match for purple coneflowers.

Where precise color coordination is important, look for seed packets with a single color of flowers. To find specific colors that best fit your planting scheme, you may have to scour catalogs for single colors of series such as Blue Point, Border Beauty, Oklahoma, Pinwheel, and Splendor. For a bright and busy multicolored bed in a kitchen or cutting garden, look for color mixes such as 'Oklahoma Formula Mix' and 'Sunbow Mix'.

[Continue reading article](#)

HOMESTEADING



2023 Food Preservation Classes

Presented by Diane Whitten, CCE Saratoga Nutrition Educator and Cornell Certified Master Food Preserver

Cornell Cooperative Extension, 50 West High Street, Ballston Spa

Cost: \$15 per class

Register by calling 518-885-8995

Tuesday, May 30 | 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm

PICKLING VEGETABLES

Learn how to make delicious pickles, including Dilly Beans (everyone's favorite) and Pickled Asparagus. Learn the difference between refrigerator pickled vegetables and pickling vegetables for canning. This class will cover the basics of canning in a boiling water bath or steam canner, including equipment needed. Includes demonstrations.

Wednesday, June 14 | 6:00 pm-8:00 pm

MAKING FULL AND LOW/NO SUGAR JAM

Learn how to make a strawberry full sugar, low sugar or no sugar jam, plus freezer jam; a no cook recipe great for kids that requires no canning equipment. This class will cover the basics of canning in a boiling water bath or steam canner, including equipment needed. Includes demonstration.



Can You Eat that Striped Bass from the Hudson River?

Submitted by Diane Whitten, Cornell Cooperative Extension Saratoga County

Striped bass are one of the most well-known fish in the entire Hudson River, prized by generations of fishermen. It's prized not only for its size (they can be upwards of 30+ pounds) and the exhilaration of catching one, but it's also prized for its culinary value. Surveys of fishermen done over the past ten years by the NYS Department of Health (DOH) Hudson River Fish Advisory Outreach Project reveal that 75% of people who say they eat Hudson River fish, say they eat striped bass.

For decades the Hudson River was polluted with the industrial chemical polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) which accumulates in the fat tissue of fish. Most anglers consider striped bass "ocean fish," believing they spend only a short portion of their lives in the Hudson River during their annual spring spawning run. This is why they think that striped bass are not contaminated with PCBs, compared to other Hudson River fish.

However, tagging studies done by researchers showing the migration of striped bass indicate that some striped bass stay in the Hudson River for much longer than previously thought. Researchers have discovered a "resident population" that stays in the Hudson River, especially between Troy and Catskill, for much longer than their spawning run. Sampling of striped bass for PCBs by New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC) over many decades shows that these fish have PCB levels often three to four times higher than other striped bass found south of the Rip Van Winkle Bridge in Catskill, as high as catfish.

Where You Fish Matters

Even though striped bass are a migratory fish, data collected over decades shows striped bass caught between Troy and Catskill can have PCB levels well above the recommended NYS DOH guidelines. How do you know if the striped bass you catch is one of those resident fish? The answer is - you don't! For this reason, the NYS DOH has a "do not eat" advisory on striped bass caught between Troy and Catskill and other restrictions south of Catskill. This advisory has been in effect for more than 20 years. Your chances of catching a striped bass with high levels of PCBs is much lower if you fish south of Catskill. So, if you plan on eating the striped bass you catch, make sure you fish between the Rip Van Winkle Bridge in Catskill and the NYC Battery.

(Want to see the data? Visit www.health.ny.gov/fish/stripedbass.htm.)





PennState Extension

Canning on Smooth Cooktops

Many people are uncertain as to whether they can safely can on smooth cooktops. The National Center for Home Food Preservation recommends the following:

- Follow the manufacturer's advice since smooth cooktops will have different features that can influence their suitability for canning.
- Some manufacturers do not recommend canning on their smooth-top stoves.
- Other manufacturers say it is okay to can but put limits on the diameter of the canner compared to the diameter of the burner.

The National Center for Home Food Preservation identifies several issues:

- Damage to the cooktop. Excessive heat may be reflected back down on the surface, especially if the canner used is larger in diameter than is intended for the burner being used. This damage includes discoloration of white tops, actual burner damage, cracking of the glass tops, and /or fusion of the metal to the glass top. Scratching can occur if the canner is slid or pulled across the cooktop which often happens with large, heavy filled canners. The weight of a canner filled with jars and water may crack the cooktop. The manual for the All-American pressure canner states that "All-American Pressure Cooker/Canners are **not** recommended for use on glass top/flat ranges because its weight may cause the glass/ceramic to break. The diameter of the canner is also larger than most burners and may cause heat to transfer outward and damage the surrounding surface.
- Automatic cut-offs on burners that shut-off the heat under the canner when heat gets excessive. If that option is built-in and the burner under a canner shuts off during the process time, the food will be under-processed and will not be safe. The process time must be continuous at the intended temperature or microorganisms may survive.
- The shape of the canner and the metal from which it is made affects suitability for smooth cooktops. Use a smooth bottom stockpot or canner for complete contact with the stovetop. Many canners do not have flat enough bottoms to be in complete contact with the burner on a smooth cooktop. This is critical to conduct heat from the burner to the water and contents in the jars to maintain a full boil over the tops of the jars. Graniteware canners with ridged bottoms are an example. Some newer boiling



Penn State University: Andy Hirneisen

water bath canners have been designed with flat bottoms suitable for smooth cooktops if the other criteria for their use have been met. Ball™ and Victorio® make stainless steel canners specifically designed for use on smooth-top ranges. The Victorio® model has a core that is suitable for smooth cooktops with an induction burner. Presto® now has a Pressure Canner constructed of heavy-gauge polished aluminum with a stainless steel-clad base suitable for an induction burner as well as gas, electric, and smooth-top ranges.

- Contact the manufacturer of your smooth cooktop before making a decision as to whether or not to can on it. They are ultimately the recommended source of this information for your stove and may also have up-to-date alternatives or suggestions for equipment you can use. Make sure they understand how large your boiling water or pressure canner is, how long it must be heated at high heat, how long the hot canner may stay on the burner until it cools, and that the canner is made from aluminum (if it is.)

If you determine that it is not safe to can on your smooth cooktop, explore [alternatives](#).

By Martha Zepp

Resources:

<https://nchfp.uga.edu/publications/nchfp/factsheets/smoothtops.html>
<https://www.healthycanning.com/canning-on-glass-and-induction-stove-tops/>



Preserving herbs by freezing or drying

Herbs are a great way to enhance your everyday meals. They can add new flavors and colors to common foods. Freezing and drying herbs when they're plentiful allows you to use them later.

Harvest, sort and wash herbs

Most herbs are at peak flavor when flower buds first appear, before they are fully open.

- Pick herbs in the morning, just after the dew evaporates and before the sun is hot.
- Discard bruised, soiled or imperfect leaves and stems.
- With the leaves on the stems, lightly wash in cool running water.
- Gently shake to remove excess water.
- Drain on paper towels.

Freezing herbs

Frozen herbs can work for cooking, though they are usually not suitable for garnish as they become limp when thawed.

Options for freezing herbs

- Place a few sprigs or leaves in freezer wrap or in an airtight freezer container.
- Spread on a tray or cookie sheet and place in the freezer. When frozen solid, pack into airtight containers.
- To use in soups or stew, dice washed herbs and pack into ice cube trays. Fill the spaces with water. When frozen, pop out cubes and store in airtight containers.

For cooked dishes, use the same amount of frozen herbs as you would fresh ones.

Drying herbs

The time it takes in ovens or food dehydrators varies with the herb and appliance used. Herbs are dry when leaves crumble off the stem. Don't crush leaves until using them – they'll lose their flavor more quickly.

Air drying in Minnesota is difficult because of the weather. Ideal conditions are consistent temperatures above 85 F and humidity below 60 percent.

Using a food dehydrator

Dehydrator drying is a fast and easy way to dry high quality herbs. Set the thermostat to 95 to 115 degrees F. Place washed herbs in a single layer on dehydrator trays. Drying time varies from 1 – 4 hours. Check your dehydrator instruction booklet for exact temperature and drying times. Check

often until leaves crumble and stems break when bent.

Using a microwave

Parsley, basil and celery leaves dry well in some microwave ovens with a wattage rating of 1,000 or less for 2-3 minutes. Place herbs in a single layer on a paper towel and cover with a second paper towel. Check every 30 seconds, rotating the herbs. Continue checking every 30 seconds until dry. Remove herbs that are dry and brittle to prevent hot spots causing the paper towel to catch fire. Continue drying for 30-second intervals until all pieces are dry and brittle.

Dried herbs keep their flavor and color 3 months in cupboards and up to 1 year in refrigerators or freezers.

Oven drying

Oven drying is especially good for mint, sage or bay leaf. Remove the leaves and dry individually instead of drying whole stems. Spread washed leaves in a single layer on a shallow baking pan. Dry at temperatures of 110 – 130 degrees F. The pilot light on a gas oven or the oven light in an electric oven is enough heat for overnight drying. Dry for 3 to 4 hours. Stir herbs periodically until thoroughly dry.

Indoor air-drying

Indoor air or room drying is an option for sturdy herbs like rosemary, sage, thyme and parsley. Stems of herbs such as mint, sage or thyme can be tied in a small cluster and hung in a dry area with good air circulation. Tie stems together with a rubber band into a cluster. Hang herbs away from the sink, stove or dishwasher where there is a lot of moisture.

For tender herbs like basil, oregano, tarragon and mint with high moisture content, put herbs in a paper bag with stems sticking out of the bag. Close opening with a string. Tear or punch holes in the sides to allow air to circulate. Herbs are dry when leaves crumble and stems break.

Herbs take 1-2 weeks to air dry at room temperature.

When drying is complete and to destroy any insects or insect eggs, heat the herbs or seeds at 160 F for 30 minutes or 175 F for 15 minutes or freeze at 0 F or lower at least 48 hours.

Vine Drying

Vine drying is a type of sun drying and works well for coriander, dill, caraway, mustard, and fennel. Simply leave it on the vine in the garden. When the vines, leaves, stems or seeds are dry and shriveled, harvest them and remove them from the stem. If still moist, the drying process is not complete and it will mold. Complete the drying process in the oven, dehydrator or air dry in a room. Find [details on vine drying](#) at the National Center for Home Food Preservation.

Continued on next page



Japanese Beetles

By Suzanne DeJohn; *Published for the New England*



Japanese beetles are difficult to control. Unlike many garden pests that come in, do their damage, and then leave, Japanese beetles emerge in June and hang around for months. And while many pests are host-specific, attacking just one type of plant, Japanese beetles feed on a variety of ornamentals

and edibles. Finally, the beetles are more mobile than many pests, and can fly in from surrounding areas, making neighborhood control efforts necessary. The good news is that they rarely do permanent damage to plants, except perhaps when they entirely defoliate young trees.

For small infestations, hand-picking may provide adequate control. Visit your garden in the cool of the morning, and knock the sluggish beetles into a can of soapy water. Larger infestations call for more drastic controls.

Do Traps Work?

Japanese beetle traps hanging from trees are a common sight in backyards, but do they really work? Yes and no. Most traps are baited with pheromones and/or food odors that the beetles find highly attractive. So yes, the traps do catch some beetles. However, the traps also attract beetles from surrounding areas, so they act as lures to draw even more beetles into your landscape. Since at least some of the new visitors won't end up in the traps, the net effect may be more beetles, not fewer.

Contact Insecticides

Some spray-on insecticides will kill Japanese beetles, but most are broad-spectrum, meaning they'll kill other insects, including beneficial ones. And because the beetles are large

compared to most insects, you need relatively heavy and frequent applications. Organic pesticides containing neem, pyrethrum, clove and peppermint oils, and insecticidal soaps will kill some beetles and repel others, so they can provide short-term control. Spinosad, a new type of organic insecticide made from fermenting a naturally occurring soil bacterium, has shown promise in controlling Japanese beetles with little harm to beneficial organisms.

Barriers

Sometimes the simplest solution is the best. Row covers draped over plants and secured at ground level will exclude the beetles, and this may be a good option for protecting young plants or keeping the beetles off ripening fruit. Kaolin clay-based sprays, such as Surround, coat plants with a thin white film that discourages feeding, but it leaves plants unsightly.

Grub Control

Japanese beetles lay their eggs in grassy areas, where the eggs hatch into the familiar white, C-shaped grubs. By targeting control efforts on the grub stage you can reduce the number of beetles, at least early in the growing season. Eventually, beetles from surrounding areas will fly in. Two organic products used to control grubs are milky spore and beneficial nematodes.

Milky spore is a naturally occurring bacterium sold as a powder that you apply to your lawn. The bacteria kill the grubs and the spores multiply inside them, so a single treatment is good for several years. However, milky spore takes a few years to build up in the soil so it's a long-term effort. Beneficial nematodes (microscopic worms) act more quickly to kill grubs, but must be applied yearly. A combination of the two may be a good bet. And an even better bet would be to convince your neighbors to treat their lawns, too.

Preserving—Continued from previous page

For any outdoor dried products, it is important to kill any insects and/or their eggs through a pasteurization process. There are two ways to pasteurize either by freezing or heating. To pasteurize by freezing, seal food in freezer bags or containers and place in a freezer set at 0°F or below for at least 48 hours. To pasteurize by heat, place food in a single layer on a cookie sheet and put into an oven preheated to 160°F for 30 minutes or 175°F for 15 minutes.

Testing for doneness

Herbs are sufficiently dry when leaves are crispy and crumble easily between the fingers.

Store in airtight containers

Place them in airtight containers or jars with tight-fitting lids. Glass keeps aromas in. Herbs must be completely dry or they mold. Store in a cool, dry, dark area, away from light and heat. Dried herbs keep their flavor and color three months in cupboards and up to one year in refrigerators or freezers. To substitute dried herbs, use a generous 1/4 teaspoon ground or 1 teaspoon crumbled dried leaves for every 1 tablespoon of fresh chopped herbs.



Cultivating Cucumbers

By Susan Littlefield



Cucumber—uploaded by [TBGDN](#)

What would a summer salad be without the cool crunch of cucumber slices? And winter would seem mighty long without some homemade pickles to remind us of our garden's summer bounty. It's so surprise that cucumbers are one of the top five home garden veggies. And even if you don't have any ground to garden in, cucumbers adapt well to container

culture, so just about everyone can enjoy a harvest of homegrown cukes!

There's a type of cucumber for every use, including slicers for fresh eating, and varieties bred especially for pickle making. You can, however, pickle any small cucumber, or eat picklers fresh right off the vine, so experiment with different varieties, regardless of how you intend to use them. Slicers generally form 5- to 9-inch long, cylindrical cucumbers with tender, dark green skins and bear over a period of 4-6 weeks. Pickling varieties produce smaller fruits on fast-growing vines and generally produce most of their crop in the space of a couple of weeks. This concentrated bearing makes it convenient to harvest plenty for a pickling session. You can also grow round yellow cukes that look like lemons or ones that can reach up to 3 feet long!

Monoecious or Gynoecious?

Open-pollinated varieties of cucumbers are old standbys and include the interesting ones with unusual colors and shapes. Hybrid cucumbers may bear more heavily and show greater resistance to some of the diseases that can trouble this crop.

Typically, cucumber vines produce separate male and female flowers on the same plant. Bees carry pollen from the male blossoms to the female blossoms in order for fruits to form. The term for these types of cucumbers is "monoecious."

But among the hybrids, you may see varieties labeled "gynoecious." These cukes only produce female flowers. Since every flower can produce a fruit, they bear especially big crops. In addition, these varieties have the broadest range of disease resistance. However, you do need to plant a monoecious variety that bears male flowers nearby in order to provide the pollen needed for fertilization. These types of cucumbers usually have some seeds of pollinator vines included right in the seed packet. Just be careful when you are thinning direct-sown seeds to leave some monoecious seedlings.

Tips for Growing Cucumbers

Sow Seeds When Warm Weather Arrives

While its name may evoke the epitome of coolness, cucumber plants like it warm. Sow seeds directly in the garden when all danger of frost is past and the soil is at least 60 degrees F; 70 degrees is even better.

Get a Head Start in Short Season Climates

Plants can be started indoors 3-4 weeks before your setting out date. Be sure not to start them indoors any earlier than this, however, as older plants don't tolerate transplanting well. And be sure to start seedlings in individual, plantable pots (like peat pots) to minimize root disturbance at planting time.

Plant in Well-Prepared Soil

Cucumbers grow best in rich soil that has been amended with compost or well-rotted manure. Plant seeds in row or hills, depending on how you plan to support the vines. When planting gynoecious varieties, include one monoecious plant for every seven or eight gynoecious plants for good pollination. Mulch to conserve soil moisture.

Provide Support

Although it is not absolutely necessary to support vines on some sort of trellis, if you do you'll get straighter, easier to pick fruits, save space, and have fewer disease problems to deal with. The vines cling by tendrils to supports. Tepees or vertical or A-frame trellises work well. Be sure to put the support in place before you plant your seeds.

Plan for Pest Control

Cucumber beetles are small yellow-green beetles with either black spots or stripes on their backs. They begin feeding in early spring on the leaves and stems of cucumbers and related plants; a heavy infestation may totally destroy plants. The eggs they lay hatch into white grubs that can stunt plants by feeding on their roots. In addition to the direct damage they do, the beetles can spread bacterial wilt and mosaic virus, two diseases that can harm or even kill plants.

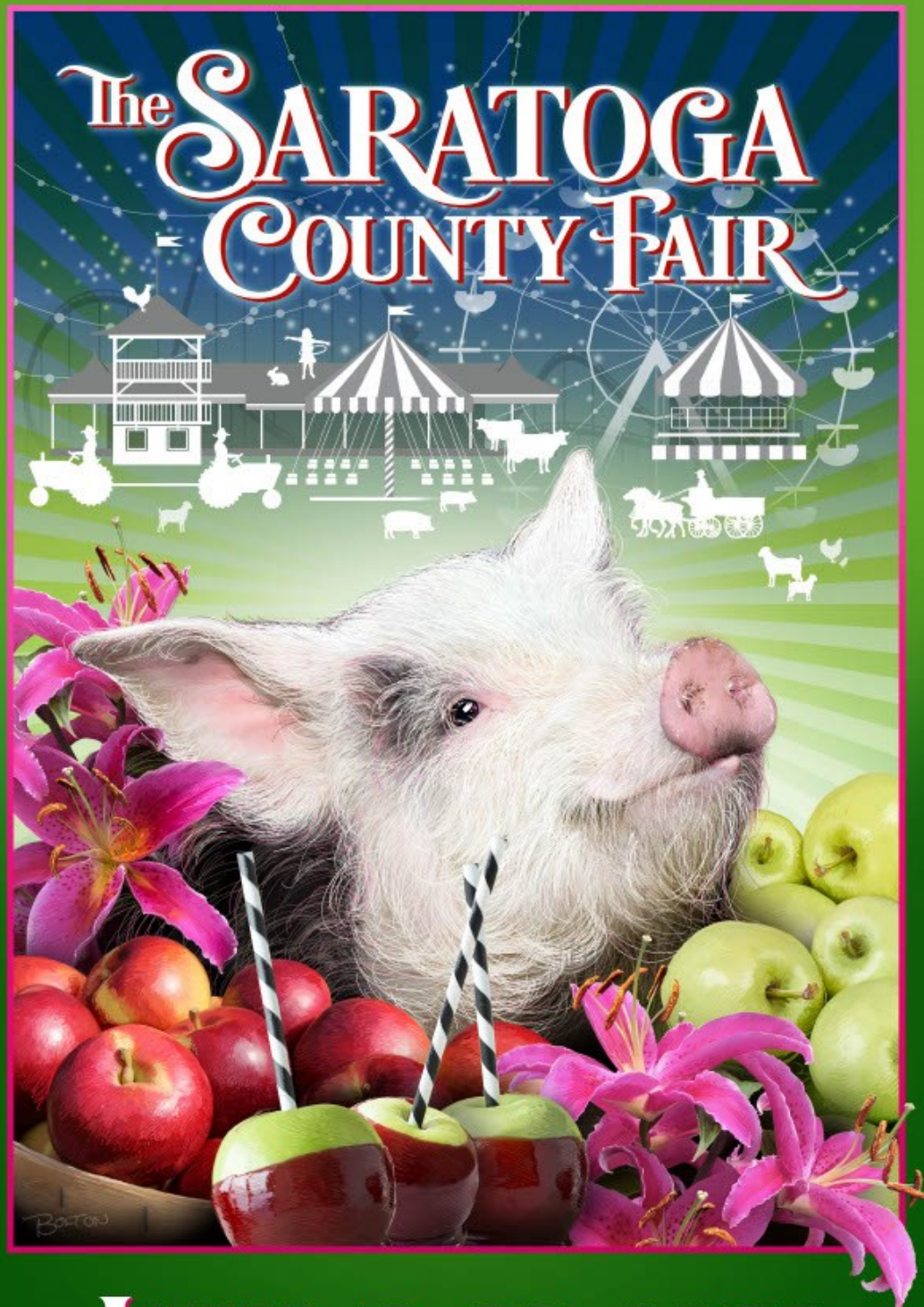
One of the best ways to control these pests is to rotate the location of cucumbers and their kin (squash, melons, pumpkins) in the garden and cover seedbeds or transplants with floating row covers immediately at planting time. You'll need to remove the covers when plants begin to bloom to allow bees in to pollinate, but covering helps to minimize damage to plants at the vulnerable seedling stage. Use a registered insecticide to control heavy infestations on uncovered plants.

Water Consistently

Cukes are mostly water, and a consistent supply of water will give the best harvest. Moisture stressed cukes may be bitter and misshapen. Drip irrigation and mulch both help reduce the possibility of water stress.

Harvest Regularly

Watch to see when the flower falls off the blossom end of the developing fruit -- you can start picking any time after that. Most pickling cukes are harvested when they are 2 to 4 inches long; most slicers are best at 6-8 inches.



JULY 18~23, 2023

SaratogaCountyFair.org



*Proceeds from Spring Vendor Fair will go to Saratoga
4-H Youth attending Nationals in June.*

Spring Vendor Fair

SUNDAY, JUNE 4

11:00 AM—6:00 PM

4-H Training Center, 556 Middleline Road, Ballston Spa

ACTIVITIES—50/50 RAFFLE—CLUB HOSTED GARAGE SALE

VENDORS

Amanda Houghton “Herbal Remedies”

Kathy Nelson “Dried Floral Arrangements”—Back in the Day

BearsNStuff—Cositas by Luz—EmiliesMinnies

GG Jewelry “girly gang” - Goodway Gourmet Bakery

Hot Response Candles—Jardin Court, LLC—Jazzy Gin Designs

Kat’s Kowgirl Krafts & Photos—Kraftikin

Kustom Kreations of Saratoga—LynnZCrafters—Stampin’ Up

Meg’s Sweet Treats—Morgan Lansing Art—My Favorite Things

My Quirky Purple Owl—Not Quite Keto (Prüvit) - Pampered Chef

Paper Creations—Papparazzi—Parker’s Perfect Soaps

Picturesque Nails By Chelly (Colorstreet) —Pieceful Creations, LLC

Propper’s Creations—Red Maple Grove Crafters

Renewal by Anderson (Huff N Puff)—Unique Expressions

Vannier Accents and Deco, LLC—Wood & Wildflower—Young Living

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Burly Boys BBQ—Freddy’s Rockin Lemonade—Squires Kettle Korn

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